

There are splendid young men who have become independent of home influences and who have never been taught or encouraged to lead in prayer, either in the home or the church.

There are fathers who bemoan the fact that they never started the family altar and who wish their sons would do so.

In entirely too many cases "going to church" has become a custom observed or not, about as returning a social call or answering a letter, determined simply upon individual whim. Someone has patronizingly said, "country people are the best sermon tasters," but are they the best sermon digesters? In the case of the average growing boy or girl deprived of Biblical instruction, what thought sticks like a burr in the mind after a doctrinal sermon? The text, perhaps. The three or four-fold outline? No, never; but only the illustrative material used. The light and frivolous, rather than "the meat of the word," seems to engage their attention most.

From these facts the writer is led to observe that the mind of the country youth of today is no longer more serious, but a shade less serious, than the mind of the city youth. What does this mean? Other things being equal, the rural generation of tomorrow will not be supplying the ministers and missionaries this generation is able to boast of. "As a man thinketh so is he," hence, unless we think big thoughts, we will not be living big lives. Herein lies the golden opportunity of the country pastor.

Next in importance to living for Christ comes giving to Christ. Except to the limited few who still hold to the tithing system laid down in the word, giving seems to have become only a relative term. To any pastor or treasurer who has ever attempted to raise a free-will subscription to some worthy cause, there has doubtless come the startling revelation of good old farmer B., holding back until he sees just how much good old farmer A. intends to give. Farmer A, either because of his greater means or his greater meanness, is too often used by farmer B and farmers C and D and others, for that matter, to set the pace like the bell-cow and allow the others to fall in behind. We all know this is so and we all know it is wrong. Why, then, let it continue so? There is entirely too much of this "Keeping up with the Joneses" in this matter of supposedly giving of our substance as the Lord hath blessed us, making the word of no avail. There seems to be no argument in the tithe system which appeals to the average farmer. He could not tell you in less than a year how much one-tenth of his income is, and then each year differs from the other.

The same principle of giving applies equally as well to giving of time and talents as to tithes.

The farmer is a busy man, if he has a mind to be. His busiest time during the year happens to fall just about the meeting time for Presbytery. Many country churches, in which there frequently is only one or two elders, go unrepresented, because of this fact. Just when Church officers could possibly render the most service, so far as time is concerned, is just the time when bad weather and bad roads make it impossible.

The matter of giving talents to the Lord is of equal importance to giving time, for it deeply concerns the Church service. Too frequently it is easier to get untrained than trained musicians to play the organ or sing in the choir. There is a peculiar timidity that comes over talented young men or young women when they are asked to consecrate their

God-given talents to Christ. The boy or girl who very successfully can raise a large merchandize order in order to earn a silver watch, seldom proves to be one who can be used or will be used, in an every-member-canvass for missions. Timidity is the devil's excuse, which helps to kill young people's souls.

What are we going to do about it? Simply work and pray! Some writers, treating the situation from the standpoint of the economist or the social service workers, would offer you their "patent applied for" panacea. Not so here. No human invention can compare with God's plans. Man's duty is to study, adapt, then adopt, that plan. "Preach the word," in season and out of season. The farmer, like the mechanic or the clerk, must first of all become a good man. Others may succeed better in whatever is their chosen vocation, but the man who has already given himself unreservedly to his Saviour has everything else in his favor for a starting point.

Read the word is the Saviour's injunction to man, for therein "ye have eternal life, and these are they which bear witness of me." The farmer who reads the "signs of the times" will not be found sleeping when He cometh.

Live the word, is what Christ wants all men to do. This applies with equal force to the man of the soil, who knows already so much about how to make things yield "some forty-fold, some sixty-fold, some an hundred-fold," as to the man of the city.

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ACTION OF THE ORLANDO ASSEMBLY: "ANSWER TO THE PROTEST."

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In a previous paper the writer asked the attention of his fellow-Presbyters throughout the Church to the action of the Orlando Assembly touching "Woman's Position in the Church." Since then he learns not without a certain satisfaction, and yet not without a certain regret also, that this action has been published in leaflet form, and may be had of Rev. Dr. James I. Vance, of Nashville—and that for the small cost of one cent. The writer himself expects to order not less than twenty-five of these leaflets, so as to insure that each elder attending the spring meeting of his Presbytery may have one before his eyes should the matter be discussed in that body. May he express the hope that many of our Christian women will invest one cent in a copy of it. He has too much respect for their intelligence to suppose that it can do them any harm. On the contrary, when they see for themselves the indubitable evidence of the haste and carelessness with which this paper, treating of a matter of the gravest importance to our Church as a whole, and to our godly women in particular, has been, as it were, "just thrown together"; when they wince, as wince they must, if they are concerned for the honor of our Church as represented in its highest court, at the flagrant grammatical and rhetorical blemishes by which the paper is marred; when, with mortification, they are forced to recognize the circumlocution and indirection that the Assembly has seen fit to employ in dealing with a question that so vitally affects their duty to their Saviour, and their influence upon the interests of his Church—when these facts have had an opportunity to make their inevitable impression upon the minds of our godly women, the writer believes that they will be slow to do what even the Assembly itself did not dare to assure them would not bring them into sharp collision with the will of their Saviour as set forth in His word. Both their good sense and "their enlightened con-

sciences" will forbid their taking so grave a risk.

But let us come to the Assembly's answer to the protest elicited by its action. It is to be hoped that Dr. Vance's leaflet will be found to include this, and also the protest itself. The writer would respectfully urge his fellow-Presbyters throughout the Church to give this part of the Assembly's action their most careful study, and then ask themselves whether more statements that are either incorrect, misleading illogical, or unethical could well have been made in a like number of sentences. It pungently recalls Isaiah's word, "from the sole of the foot even to the head there is no soundness in it."

In the first paragraph the Assembly expresses its regret that "any of its members should even intimate that any action of the highest court of the Church was not governed by whole-hearted loyalty to the Holy Scriptures, &c." The tone of injured innocence that pervades these words is suited to mislead the casual reader. They may easily divert attention from the Assembly's action to its motives. Saul's motives were the purest, and yet he persecuted the Church of God. The Protestants in this case call attention to the fact that whatever the Assembly's motives, its action contravenes the word of God. They would have been remiss in their duty to their constituents and to their Master—yes, and even to their brethren of the majority had they done less.

The true ground for regret in this case is that the Assembly's concern for its good name was so illogical, and above all that it was so belated. Had this concern come into play at the proper time, and in a more practical form, it would have prevented "the highest court of the Church" from humiliating the Church of which it is "the highest court" by writing irrevocably into its records papers that might well be submitted to students of English grammar, composition, and logic in the freshman classes of our colleges as "Exercises to be Corrected."

The second paragraph of the "answer" reads, "the Scriptures may have their authority discredited not merely by a violation of their precepts, but also by an attempt on the part of ecclesiastical courts to bind the consciences of God's people on matters of doubtful interpretation." Here again we encounter circumlocution and indirection. Far be it from the writer to assert or imply that they are intentional, and farther yet to undertake to fathom their actual intent. But for the fact that it is obviously inapplicable to Assemblies, the explanation best suited to all the phenomena would be that this circumlocution and indirection are simply the unpremeditated and unconscious expression of a connatural infirmity—like talking in one's sleep for example. But our inability to explain them does not in this case make the circumlocution and indirection any the more beautiful, or any the less mischievous. "On matters of doubtful interpretation?" The Assembly evidently had something in mind in using this not ill-sounding assemblage of vocables, but who shall tell us exactly what it was? Can it mean, as it certainly implies, that 1 Cor. 14:34, and 1 Tim. 2:8-12 are "of doubtful interpretation"? If so, then this unique, and momentous discovery must of itself immortalize the grave pundits of the Orlando Assembly. If 1 Cor. 14:34, and 1 Tim. 2:8-12 are indeed of "doubtful interpretation," it is a discovery, and one that without exaggeration must be called unique. Certainly the exegetes of an earlier day were not aware of the fact. Blomfield, in his Greek New Testament, even goes the length of saying that